

The LONDON MIDLAND and SCOTTISH RAILWAY



FOUNDED 1963

THE LMS
SOCIETY



LINESIDE ESTATES

L. G. Warburton

LMS Society Monograph No 5

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Acknowledgements.

The National Archive, Kew.

East Kilbride News.

Christine Mcainsh, East Kilbride Central Library.

BBC Wales.

Mr Hassan and Patricia Lee, Royal Portrush Golf Club.

Carlisle Record Office.

Jim Maguire, Windermere Lake Services Manager.

Companies House, Cardiff.

Hansard, House of Lords.

Ian Mckenzie

BRB (Residual) Ltd. Janet Sinclair, Peter Trewin, Greg Beecroft and Neil Butters.

(Including WWII Air Raid Precaution & Government Financing Arrangements).

Chapter 1 – The formation of the new company Lineside - Estates.

The LMS Railway was one of the largest companies in the world that not only ran trains the length and breadth of Britain but also had interests in road transport, shipping, airlines and hotels etc. A lesser-known activity was its property company “Lineside Estates Limited”.

It was reported at the Board meeting on 24th July 1930 (Minute 2314) referring to Radlett - that *“in view of the considerable building activity which was likely to take place in the district in the near future”*, the Traffic Committee contemplated building a station. It went on to say, *“an opportunity has occurred of acquiring an area of land over and above that required for the Company’s purposes and it might be to the Company’s advantage to buy this land if it can be obtained at a reasonable price as its value would be greatly enhanced by the development of the neighbourhood”*. The meeting went on to provisionally approve the scheme assuming *“the purchase was not outside the Company’s legal powers”*. It was therefore a requirement to legalise the situation and Section 30 of the LMS Act of 1933 gave powers for the Company to invest monies in *“the acquisition of, inter alia, shares in a Company whose principal object is the acquisition and development of any Estate, or interest in lands, etc., in the vicinity of the Railway”*.

The LMS lost no time in forming the new Company that was approved in principal by the LMS Board on 23rd November 1933. (Minute 2922) *“for the acquisition and development of land etc under powers conferred upon the Company under Section 30 of the LMS Act, 1933 – Power to invest in Land Companies”*. As a result of these new powers the LMS decided to form a Company, entirely owned by the LMS that was able to borrow or mortgage if that was found desirable in the future.

The new Company was to be used mainly as a medium for the acquisition and development of land where that is justified by the possibility of increased revenue in traffic receipts and land increment. At that time investigations were being made with regard to suitable land for purchase. The initial name of the new private Company was unsurprisingly “Radlett Estates” *“for the acquisition of land*

The purchase and sales of properties were to be carried out by the existing LMS Estate Department organisation and the Land and Rating Committee as already existed, with the financial transactions dealt with in detail through the new Company’s Accounts. The Memorandum and Articles of Association were completed by the Chief Legal Adviser and the Secretarial, Accounting, etc., work was included within the functions of the existing LMS Departments.

At the Board Meeting on 24th January 1934 (Minute 2957) it was recommended that the nominal capital of the Company be £10,000, that the Registered Office be Euston Station, that the name of the Company to be “Central and General Estates Limited” (see below). The Board to consist of not less than three nor more than nine Directors with the first being:-

Sir John F. Beale, K.B.E.

Edward Brockenhurst Fielden. (Plate 1).

Charles Ker, Esq. LL.D., C A.. (Plate 2).

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Knutsford.(Plate 50

Lt. Col. Sir H. Arthur Rose, D.S.O. (Plate 4).

Sir Thomas Williams (Plate 3).

Graham Royde Smith (Plate 6) was the Company Secretary and that the Estate work to be discharged by the LMS Estates Manager and his staff.

”

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Knutsford was to decide the name of the Company.

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On completion of Memorandum and Articles of Association the name of the new Company must have been changed to "Lineside Estates Limited" as it was this name that was registered in 1934, Number.293716.

The Company continued to exist after Nationalisation in 1948 as A. J. Pearson states in his book "*Man of the Rail*" that, c.1960 he was appointed as a Director of Lineside Estates and Leonard James Mckenzie was the company secretary until 1964 when he retired.

On 13th February 1963 approval was given for Lineside Estates to cease trading and the assets be transferred to the direct ownership of the Railways Board. The payment stamp duty was avoided by conveying the properties, firstly to Britravel Nominees Ltd and then from Britravel Nominees to the Railways Board. The properties involved in this transfer were "The Grove Estate", Watford and "Fielden House", 10 Great College Street, Westminster. The document authorising this transfer was dated 15th October 1964 BRB (Residuary) Ltd, who succeeded The British Railways Property Board advised that these transfers took place on 24th December 1964. Lineside Estates Ltd, was stated to have 5000 shares of £1 each, with a book value of £17,839/0/0d, when it was transferred to Britravel Nominees Ltd, together with eleven other Companies.

Chapter 2 – The Initial Directors



Plate 1. *Edward Brocklehurst Fielden was elected on to the LMS Board by shareholders of the LYR where he was Chairman from 1918. He was MP for Middleton from 1900 – 1906 and High Sheriff of Salop in 1911. He was a JP for Oxfordshire and Salop and a Director of Fielden Bros. Ltd. and related to John Fielden – see later under Westminster.*

LMS Magazine 11/1923.



Plate 2. *Charles Ker was a Chartered Accountant and elected a Director of the GSWR in 1915, becoming Deputy Chairman in 1920, and elected by its Bank of Scotland.*

LMS Magazine 6/1924.

Plate 3. *Sir Thomas Williams M.Inst.T. was the General Manager of the LNWR before his election as Director in 1920. During WW1 he was a member of the Railway Executive Committee and in 1917 was Chairman of the Goods Managers Conference of the Railway Clearing House. He was elected on to the LMS Board by the LNWR shareholders and was also a Director of Baldwin's Ltd., The Gloucester Wagon Co. and the Birmingham Canal Navigations.*

LMS Magazine 7/1924.





Sir Arthur Rose
LMS Mag. 9/1933 P367.

Plate 4. Sir Arthur Rose was a member of the LMS Scottish Local Committee from 1924 and of the NCC in Ireland. He represented the LMS as Director of the Forth Bridge Railway Co., David McBrayne (1928) Ltd. and the Scottish Motor Traction Co. He was Chairman of the Clyde Paper Co. Ltd., Craig and Rose Ltd. and the Melville Trust Ltd., and a Director of the Union Bank of Scotland and Scottish Equitable Life Assurance Co. and of the LMS from 1933.

LMS Magazine 9/1933.

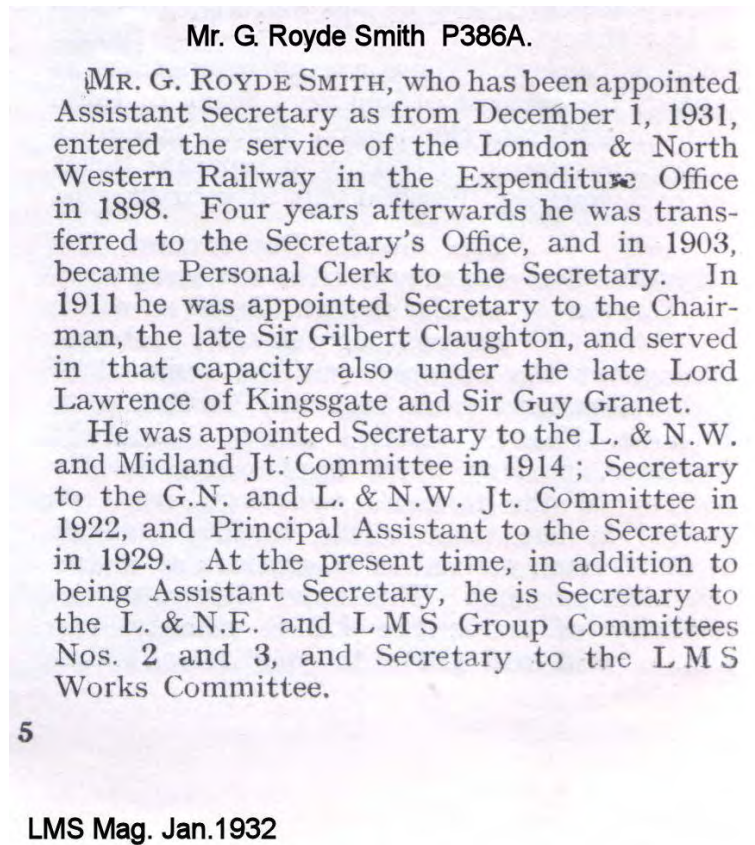
Plate 5. Viscount Knutsford Hon. Arthur .H. Holland Hibbert
Born 19/3/1855; 1880 Director of LNWR.
1/1/1923 Director (ex LNWR & NLR)
LMS Mag. 1/24 p.84 Photo & Notes Director
Became 3rd Viscount Knutsford
4/1928 appointed as Director of the Bank of England. MIN. 1828.
Died. 15/1/1935 aged 79. Min 3133.



HON. A. H. HOLLAND HIBBERT

Sir John Field Beale KBE
6/12/1919 Joined the MR Board.
1/1/1923 Director
Died 9/12/1935.

Plate 6. George Royde-Smith G.
Asst. Secretary



Chapter 3 – Interesting acquisitions

Whilst it is not possible to know all the properties that “Lineside Estates” had an involvement, certain transactions and possible deals are of great interest and will be related here.

1. Lake Windermere

It was reported at the Board meeting (minute 4460) on 29th. July 1936 The Lowther Estates acting for Lord Lonsdale had offered the Lake to the LMS Railway for £6000.

It will be recalled that in 1872 the Furness Railway Company obtained Parliamentary Powers to run steamboats on the lake, and a year later Lord Lonsdale, as owner of the lake, leased to the FR for a period of 99 years the right to construct and maintain five piers for landing passengers at Ambleside, Low Wood, Bowness, Ferry Point and Newby Bridge, and also to run boats on the Lake. The lease provided for an annual payment of five shillings (25p) in respect of the piers, which were to be given up at the end of the term in a proper state of repair, plus £5 per annum for each steamboat placed on the lake. Later a Station and Landing was constructed at Lakeside on land purchased from Lord Lonsdale.

In 1933 his Lordship's rights in the lake were offered to the LMS but the Company Solicitor considered the LMS had no power to purchase. Since that date the Company had obtained the

necessary powers meaning that Lineside Estates were at liberty to acquire and hold such rights, in order to combat competition on the Lake by acquiring mooring rights, anchorages etc .and to secure the Company's position on expiration of the present lease.

Lord Lonsdale's ownership was confined to the bed of the Lake below the 128 feet ordnance datum level and comprised a surface area of 3,643 acres, and was held by him as Lord of the Manor of Applethwaite, although certain landing places on the shore of the Lake came under the jurisdiction of the Windermere and Ambleside Urban District Councils.

The LMS were paying Lord Lonsdale annual rents for Landing Piers, Steamboats etc amounting to £68/6/8d in addition to his Lordship's rent roll for the Lake that amounted to approximately £174 in 1935. Whilst his agent quoted a sale price of £6000, an offer of £5500 would be accepted. The small islands on the Lake were not the property of Lord Lonsdale. Authority was asked at the meeting to negotiate a settlement on behalf of Lineside Estates and the matter referred back to the Executive Committee.

In the event the Lake was purchased from the Lowther Estates for £6000 by a conveyance dated 5th April 1939 when Lowther Estates sold 'all that piece of land covered by water forming the whole of the bed or soil of Windermere Lake...together with all such rights and interests (if any) vested in the company', to Windermere Urban District Council. In the local Government reorganisation of 1974 the Windermere UDC was abolished and the lake vested as an asset of the South Lakeland District Council.

There is no further mention in the Board Minutes as to why the Lake was not secured by the LMS railway.

2. Prestatyn Holiday Camp.

An early activity was recorded at the LMS Board meeting on 30th June 1938 when it was explained that Thomas Cook had approached the LMS with a view to setting up holiday camps in the UK following the growth of "holidays with pay". It was considered desirable to initially concentrate on one site in order to test the possibilities as an option on land was available at Prestatyn in North Wales.

The scheme as proposed required a capital sum of £150,000 on which a return of not less 10% was anticipated in addition to the railway revenue accruing from combined bookings. The meeting agreed to provide half of the required capital through its company Lineside Estates, with the other half coming from Thomas Cook and other non-railway subscribers. Details had at this stage still to be agreed, but it was the intention to have a small Board of about four Directors, of whom two would be LMS officers. (Board Minute 3769 19/6/39).

The Board meeting on 26th October 1939 approved the loan of £75,000 to Thomas Cook (British Holiday Estates Limited) subject to repayment at three months' notice with interest payable half yearly at 1% above bank rate.

Prestatyn Holiday camp was opened in 1939 and occupied 41 acres near Ffrith Beach. During the War it was taken over by the Royal Signals and the 1st Airborne Division.

At the meeting on 23rd November 1944 (Board Minute 4863) agreed in principle to the proposed sale to Messrs. Thomas Cook & Son Ltd., the 75,000 shares of £1 each in British Holiday Estates at a price not less than par. The Board meeting on 25th January agreed to a figure of 24 shillings per share for the LMS *and other holdings*?. At the next Board meeting held on 22nd March it was disclosed that Thomas Cook had agreed to purchase the shares for 24 shillings each and also to repay the loan of £75,000. To finance these payments, the purchase at 24 shillings of about 30,000 shares held by others and about £20,000 for the acquisition and equipment of the Farringford Camp in the Isle of Wight, it was proposed that the Hay's Wharf Cartage Company should make a loan from the LMS of £200,000 at 3% to Cooks, and for this purpose a loan from the LMS Company of £30,000 at 3% (one quarter of the amount to be lent by the four Railway Companies to the Hay's Wharf Cartage Company) was approved. The four main line Railway Companies had acquired The Hay's Wharf Cartage Co. that incorporated Messrs. Pickfords and Carter Paterson together with Pickfords Travel Business in 1933 for

c.£2m, the LMS share amounting to £520,000 or one quarter of the amount. (LMS Board Minute 2899).

The camp was acquired by Pontins in the 1970s, before being closed in favour of a new Pontins site near Central Beach at Barkby Avenue. The original site is now a housing estate.



Plate 5. *The Prestatyn Holiday Camp c1949.*

BBC Wales - North East Sites

3. Royal Portrush Golf Club

The Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine and Portrush Railway, which opened in November 1855, was amalgamated as part of the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway (BNCR) in January 1861 which eventually became part of the Midland Railway (MR) as from 1st July 1903. The Act of Parliament provided for a Committee of Management called “The Northern Counties Committee” (NCC) that also included several other Irish Railways.

The Golf Club was always closely associated with the railway as the development of rail travel, especially in the northern area of Portrush provided the opportunity to develop a new golf course in the triangular area close to Portrush Station. This land had been leased to the BNCR as part of its railway development in 1877. The land owner was Lord Antrim who leased the land for 21 years for review in 1909 by which time the railway had become the NCC/MR.

After a long and protracted negotiation with both the railway company and the Golf Club, Lord Antrim agreed to a further lease of 60 years from 1909 to the railway company at £500 pa. The golf club would again occupy the land as licensee paying £300 pa to the railway company who would continue to receive special rates on the Golf Club links for their Hotel Guests.

The BNCR had purchased an interest in the Antrim Arms Hotel in Portrush in 1885 and eventually purchased the hotel outright in 1891 re-naming it The Northern Counties Hotel, which became one of the most famous railway hotels in the British Isles, and it was always the object

of the railway company to attract golfers to stay at this premier hotel with the incentive of “special terms” for play on the Royal Portrush Links. Between the years 1908 and 1928 (by which time the NCC was part of the London Midland and Scottish Railway) there were more long and protracted discussions, this time between the Golf Club and the railway company, however, by 1928, and the arrival of Sir Anthony Babington to lead the Golf Clubs interest, there was a vast improvement in relationships and a new lease was signed in 1928.

The second recorded Lineside Estates loan was to the Royal Portrush Golf Club that required a new clubhouse, as Lord Antrim wished to resume possession of part of the course for building purposes. The estimated cost of the work was between £10,000 and £12,000 of which £3000 was to be provided by members, £4000 by Lord Antrim with the balance of £5000 by a building society loan under guarantee by the LMS, or an advance from Lineside Estates in lieu of the building society. The scheme was approved in principle at the LMS Board meeting on 23rd. February 1939. The Board meeting on 25th May 1939 agreed to advance the required £5000 via Lineside estates, to be repaid over 23 or 25 years as the club may desire, on the basis of 4 ½% interest and 4% sinking fund for the redemption of capital.

With the advent of World War II the new clubhouse was not built, however at the Board Meeting on 28th November 1946 it was recorded in Minute 5133 that the loan made for the building of the new clubhouse could now be used towards the purchase of the Holyrood Hotel including the furniture, furnishings and equipment. The Holyrood Hotel was situated on the Bushmills Road now known as Dunluce Road and was originally a private school in close proximity to the golf course.

At the time the new clubhouse came into use in 1947 the NCC (LMS) donated a trophy to the club that was awarded to the competitor who returned the two best net scores during the month of August. This was obviously to encourage visitors, including hotel guests, the first winner, in 1947, being Mr. R. G. Houston. The trophy is now awarded to the winners of a Four Ball Better ball Combined Stableford played for in May.

Interestingly up until the 1960s (when the loan was discharged) two representatives of the LMS/NCC were ex-officio members of the Royal Portrush Golf Club Council.



Plate 6. *The Antrim Arms Hotel, opened in 1837 was the first in Portrush serving visitors to the world famous Giant's Causeway. In 1891 the Antrim Arms was purchased by the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway and renamed the Northern Counties Hotel.*

Royal Portrush Golf Club.



Plate 7. The Northern Counties Hotel in its heyday when only the wealthiest in the land could afford to stay there. Visitors included HRH Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught who stayed when visiting the Giant's Causeway in 1860. It was re-constructed by the Railway Company in 1882 and in 1906 the rear of the hotel was extended, the latter scheme included the magnificent ballroom decorated in the Louis XIV style. A heated swimming pool was added in 1935. As with all railway hotels it was sold in the summer of 1966 and has since changed hands several times. In March 1990 it was completely destroyed by fire.

Royal Portrush Golf Club.



Plate 8. The Warren House Boarding Establishment which became the Holyrood Hotel and was purchased with a Lineside Estates loan to become the Clubhouse of the Royal Portrush Golf Club in 1946

Royal Portrush Golf Club



Plate 9. The Club-house of the Royal Portrush Golf Club as it is in 2007 bearing little or no resemblance to the Warren House Boarding Establishment.

Royal Portrush Golf Club.

Plate 10. The NCC/LMS trophy presented to the club in 1947, the first winner being Mr. R. G. Houston.

Royal Portrush Golf Club



4 - Land at Speke.

Authority was given in 1939 to purchase 84 acres of land at between £100 and £120 per acre that was cancelled on 28/4/1945. (Board minute 4947).

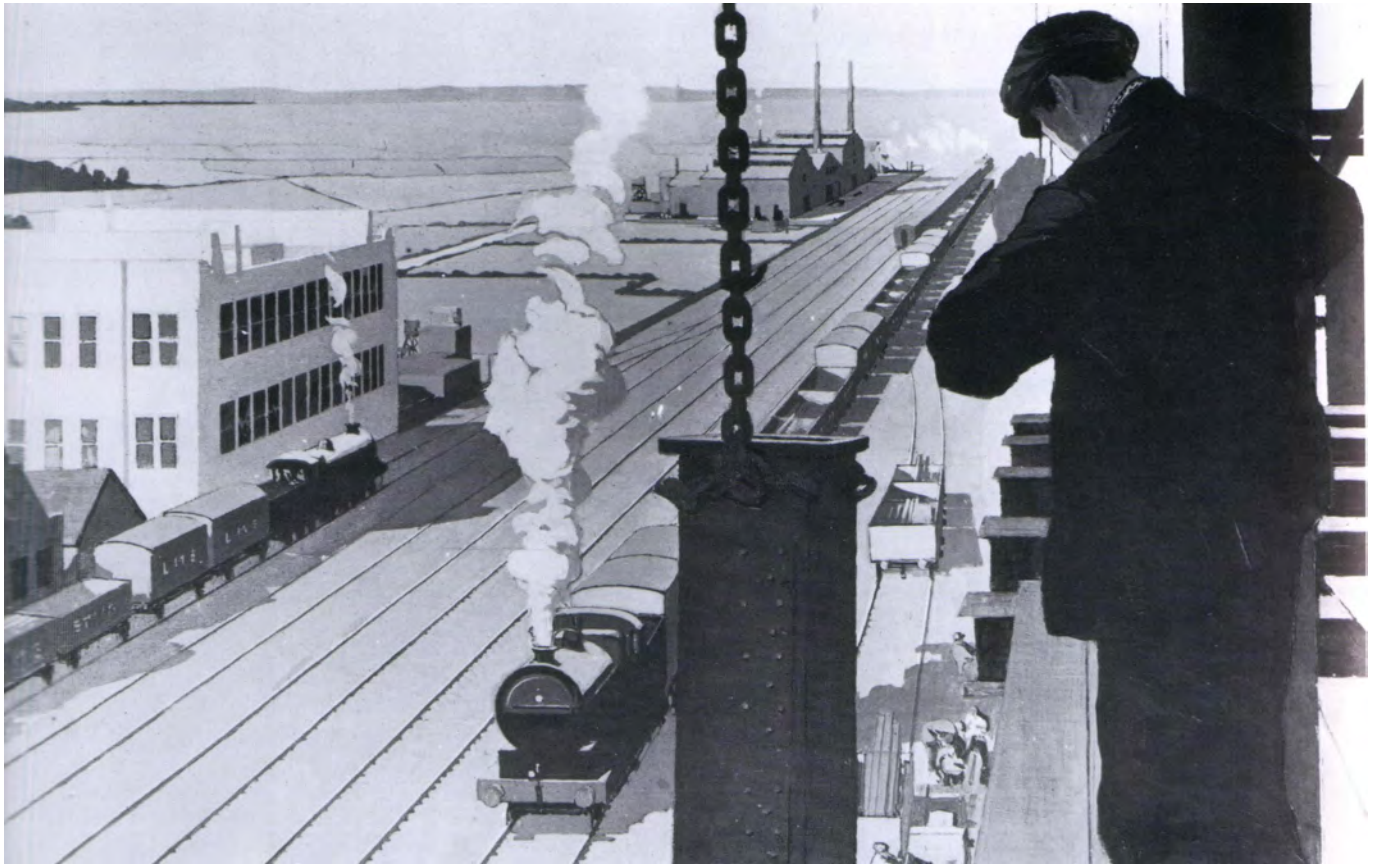


Plate 11. A “Sites for Factories” poster extensively used to advertise land that the LMS owned and which could be made available for development, part of the agreement being that all goods not sold locally would be transported by rail.

Nelson Twells.

Chapter 4 – “The Grove” and other Watford properties

This property was by far the largest and most important as it involved the purchase of what was to be the home of the LMS management staff throughout the World War II. At the Board meeting on 23rd January 1939 (minute 3866) it was disclosed that the Minister of transport had agreed to defray the Railway Companies up to £3,250,000 to implement schemes to ensure that the railways could continue to operate in the case of an emergency, providing the Companies would carry out at their expense such part of the work necessary for the protection of their personnel which would fall normally under the obligation to be “good employers”. A condition of the offer was that the railways would be taken into the possession of the Government in the event of war. As a matter of urgency the offer was accepted by the Railway Companies Association on behalf of the four companies, without prejudice to any basis which may ultimately be agreed or determined in regard to the compensation to be paid to the Railways.

The LMS share of this amount was £1,359,700 to be allocated as follows:-

	£
Administrative and control centres	267,000
Signal Boxes.....	245,000
Power station and substations.....	73,000
Civil Engineer – Emergency stores (3 months’ supply).....	129,000
Signal & Telegraph Engineer (Emergency Stores 12 months’ supply)317,000
Chief Mechanical Engineer – Emergency stores (Loco spare parts – 3 months’ supply).....	140,000
Lighting restrictions.....	85,000
Extra protection for essential staff at certain & depots... ..	113,000

All companies between them were to provide:-

Twelve 35-ton steam breakdown cranes.....	120,000
Welding and burning plant	10,000
Emergency telephone connections with GPO circuits.....	25,000
Improved hydraulic power plant at Brentford Docks for Wartime coal supplies	113,000

This left the LMS railway, under obligation as a “good employer” to consider the following:-

1. Training of air raid precaution services.
2. Work in preparation of schemes of precautions
3. Arrangements for giving air raid warnings.
4. Provision of reasonable splinter proof shelters.
5. Provision of protective clothing.
6. Additional fire fighting appliances.
7. Lighting restrictions.

It was not abundantly clear which of these latter items would be paid for by the Government, but it was estimated the Company would find it necessary to spend £200,000 in carrying out schemes as soon as possible with a further £150,000 when the emergency occurred.

On 27th April 1939 the LMS Board, under minute 3926, approved the purchase by Lineside Estates of The Grove at Watford consisting of sixty rooms standing in about 300 acres and by now owned by The Equity and Law Life Assurance Company. The purchase price was £89,538 (Min. 4847 – 25/10/1944).

The Grove was purchased by the LMS on the 15th May 1939, the idea being to provide sufficient accommodation for the Euston and St. Pancras managerial staff in the event of war breaking out.

The Board approved expenditure of £100,000 as part of the £150,000 authorised in minute 3866 above. The house eventually cost £89,538 with a further £70,000 allocated to prepare the property for occupation by LMS staff. This included the provision of 39 huts some of which were approved by Works Committee 4923 (26/5/1939) and 5008 (29/9/1939). The provision of these huts was clearly secret as their erection was referred to as Scheme "X" in the minutes. Works Committee Minute 4924 called for Holliday & Greenway Ltd to supply 16 huts at a cost of £5,616 and to erect them for a further £11,881/2/8d also a lavatory block for £1,017/17/10d. Works Committee Minute 5008 approved the expenditure of £12,053/2/8d for the same Company to erect 16 further huts at £753/6/5d each but did not state the supplier. Air raid shelters and a movement building where staff organised wartime rail traffic were also built, the eventual total cost of which was £160,121. (Board Min. 4847 – 26/10/1944).

It was said that a tunnel existed all the way from The Grove to Grove Mill House which seems an unlikely story given the distance. Apparently the tunnel only went a few yards from behind a door in the cellar. (Could it have been Lord Stamp's escape route from the Nazis?).

The Grove had been the seat of the Earls of Clarendon who had left to reside in Hampstead in the 1920s but retained ownership until it was sold to The Equity and Life Assurance Company, prior to which it was used as gardening school, a hotel and health centre, the HQ of the National Institute of Nutrition and College of Dietetics as well as a high class girls boarding school.

Minute 3998 recorded at the Board meeting on 28th September 1939 that all the outlay in providing accommodation at The Grove, including furniture, road making etc. should be made a capital outlay of Lineside Estates and in respect of property occupied by the LMS, a commercial rent be paid reflecting the depreciation of capital having regard to its special use for a limited time.

The Grove was retained by the British Transport Commission and became the British Railways School of Management. The estate was conveyed by Lineside Estates to British Railway's Board on 24th December 1964 as stated above. On 31st March 1995 it ceased to be used by British Railways and was sold on 16th February 1996 for £2.5m that became £3.5m once the desired planning permission was obtained for a hotel that opened in August 2003.

Figure 1. *A 1941 site plan showing the wartime huts and air raid shelters erected by the LMS following the evacuation of Management Staff from Euston and St. Pancras*

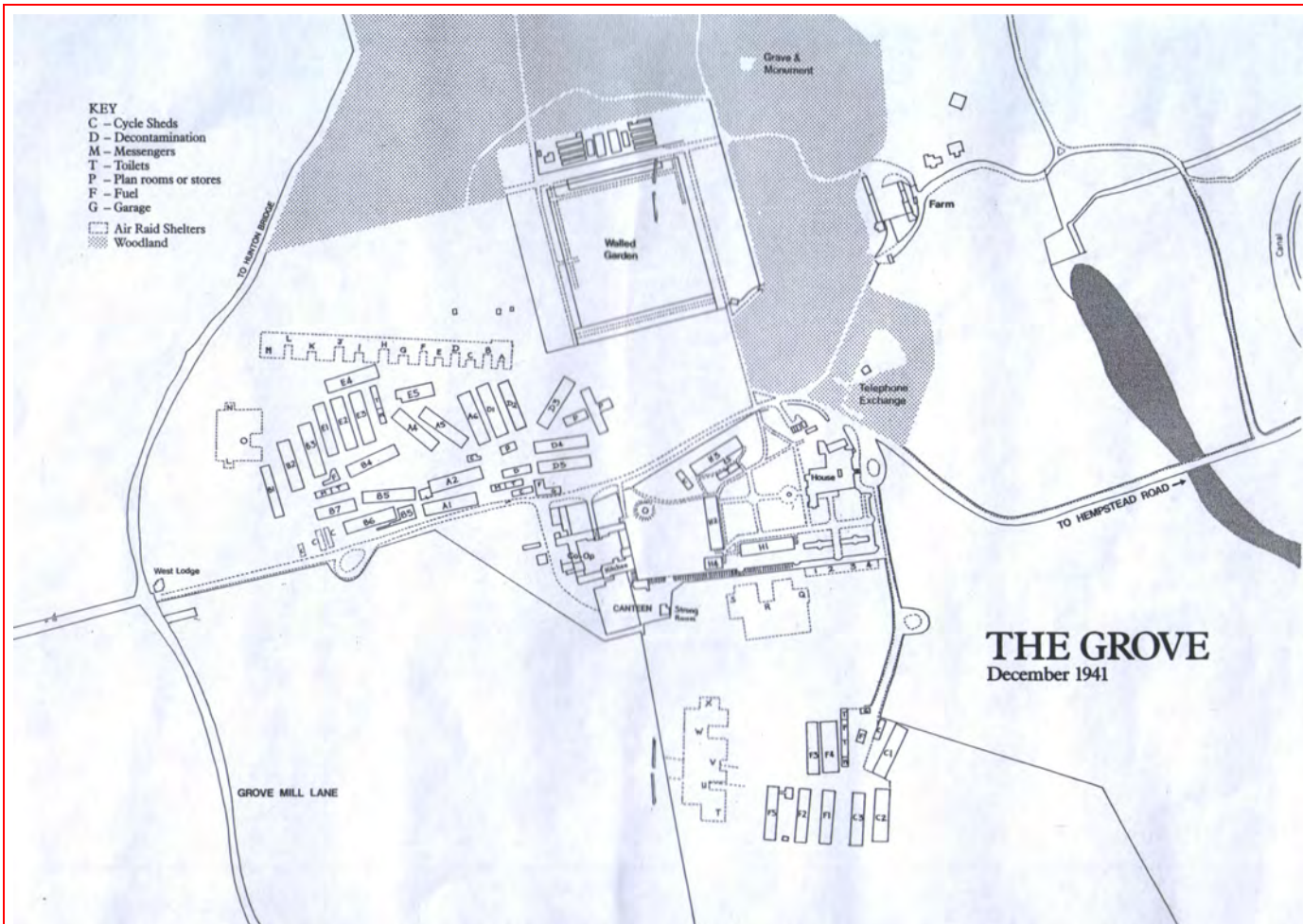


Plate 12. *The Grove, Watford was the property of Lineside Estates and the LMS War-time Headquarters. It was originally the seat of the Earls of Clarendon and the fifth in line of the second creation Edward Hyde Villiers and his second wife are buried in the grounds. The ground and first floor rooms were used by the Lord Stamp, the Vice-Presidents, together with their staff. The top floor, (ex-servants bedrooms) were used by the Chief Officers. At the time this picture was taken The Grove was occupied by the British*



Transport Commission as the Work Study Training Centre.

Authors collection



Plate 13. *The Grove as a Hotel on the occasion of an LMS Society visit on the 13th May 2006.*
L. G. Warburton.

6. Grove Mill House, Watford.

LMS Board minute 4286 on 29th May 1941 recorded approval to the Lineside Estates purchase of Grove Mill House, Watford, which included forty acres of land, two cottages and a garage, the price being £6000.

7. Willow Grange, Watford.

On 24th July 1941, the LMS Board (minute 4326) approved the purchase by Lineside Estates of Willow Grange, Church Road, Watford from Mr. C. E. Enever for £10,606. The property was to accommodate Hotel Department staff requiring a further £8,894 expenditure for alterations.

The BW (British Waterways) Monthly for January 2008 revealed that Willow Grange was sold to Barratt Homes for £12.3 million and planning permission had been obtained to convert the office building into apartments and build 174 new homes with 190 parking spaces on the 4.87 acre site. The money is to be invested to provide an income stream for the maintenance of the waterways. The 94 staff moved into a new head office at 64 Clarendon Road, directly opposite Watford Junction Station, the object of the move was to save between £250,000 and £280,000 on the running costs of Willow grange.

The article then went on to give a brief history as follows:-

The large tract of land originally belonged to Merton College, Oxford came into the hands of the Earl of Essex (family name Capel). A deed of exchange dated 2nd November 1890 transferred some of the land from the sixth Earl to a widow, Mary Ann Walker and from then until the dwelling house, Willow Grange, was built in the late 1890s, the land changed hands several times and continued to do so, until -

8th September 1941 – bought by the British Transport Commission for £10,500. According to the LMS Board minutes Lineside Estates was the purchaser as referred to above..

29th September 1941 – Planning permission granted for the Midland and Scottish Railway Company to use the house as offices for the duration of the Second World War. (Note the absence of London?).

29th April 1949 – The Docks and Inland Waterways Executive took over the property.

26th January 1950 – After several applications to Watford Borough Council, limited planning consent for 15 years was granted by the Ministry of Town & Country Planning.

8th November 1950 – Change of use was confirmed by Watford B.C.

18th December 1962 – The property was conveyed to the British Transport Commission for £10,605. (The same price that the LMS paid?).

25th December 1962 – Willow Grange transferred to the British Waterways Board.

1991/92 Extended at a cost of £9.4 million to provide 55,400 sq. ft. of office space, housing 180 head office staff together for the first time.

8. The Grey House, Watford.

This Alexandra Road property was approved for purchase by Lineside Estates, at the Board meeting on 30th July 1942 (Minute 4480) although for what purpose is not recorded. It seems that Fanny Craddock, the TV cookery personality, was a tenant of one of the Watford British Rail properties.

9. Essex Lodge.

Parkside Road, Watford was purchased for occupation of the Chief Commercial Manager.

Chapter 5 - Thorntonhall Estate, near Glasgow.

The Scottish Committee of the LMS at their meeting on 17th June 1941 referred to the purchase of Thorntonhall Estate, including the mansion for the accommodation of a number of staff in Glasgow to permit of properties thus vacated being available for other Glasgow staff in the event of their offices being damaged by enemy action as mass bombing of the Clydeside shipyards was anticipated.

The Land and Works Committee, meeting on 24th July 1941 (minute 704), recommended the purchase, when it mistakenly stated "for *excavation* of staff". The Board approved the purchase on 26th July 1941 (Minute 4310). The plan was to provide emergency accommodation for 1200 staff employed in the Divisional Headquarters, Glasgow, as reported at the Board meeting on 27th November 1941. The property was purchased from Arthur Bishop for £15,125 although it is doubtful if any railway staff were actually evacuated there. For obvious reasons Thorntonhall was often referred to locally as 'Bishops House', although there was no ecclesiastical connection. A further £50,192 was spent on huts etc. for the staff and £4,925 on furniture. Seven flat roofed concrete buildings were built in the grounds, apparently used to store office furniture. Later some wives of Polish soldiers were housed there.

Post war the property was put up for sale, when, according to the East Kilbride Development Corporation (EKDC) Minutes of 22nd August 1947 "*The property consists of a Mansion house, which might be utilised as a central administration office, 6 hutted blocks which might be made available to contractors for the accommodation of workmen and the like, and about 75 acres of ground in park form. The District Valuer, who has been undertaking provisional negotiations, has suggested a price of £20,000, and the reply from the owners, the LMS Railway Company, is awaited*".

East Kilbride was designated a New Town in 1947, under the provisions of the New Towns act of 1946. The Secretary of State for Scotland established the East Kilbride Development Association in August 1947. The EKDC was responsible for planning the housing, industry and infrastructure of the new Town, and it worked in tandem with Lanark County Council (and in 1975 the East Kilbride District Council), until it was finally disbanded in 1996.

The EKDC minutes for 31st October 1947 stated:-

"The provisional approval of the Minister of transport had already been sought and secured the acquisition of Thorntonhall Estate from the London Midland & Scottish Railway Company and it now rested with the Development Corporation to decide whether, with a view to leasing the property to the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research on terms yet to be arranged, they should enter into formal negotiations already provisionally adjusted by the District Valuer and recommended for acceptance by the Chief Valuer. It was unanimously resolved that Thorntonhall Estate, extending to 77.427 acres or thereby, should be acquired by the Development Corporation on the terms and conditions set out in EKP3". Unfortunately EKP3 is not included in the minutes and therefore the final purchase price and any conditions are not to hand.

The house was acquired by the Development Corporation and was used as temporary premises by the Government for the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. Branch Stations of the Building Research Station, the Fuel Research Station and the Transport and Road Research Laboratory were established in the wartime concrete buildings. In 1955 a special laboratory in which radioactive materials could be stored and used was built close to the summerhouse.



Plate 14. Thorntonhall Mansion and Estate near East Kilbride, bought by the LMS in 1941 to house its Glasgow staff in the event of mass German bombing of the Clydeside shipyards.
South Lanarkshire Council.



Plate 15. Thorntonhall Mansion – sold to the East Kilbride Development Corporation after World War II. Both pictures are believed to date from the late 1940s

South Lanarkshire Council.

Rents and Charges.

A total of £219,117 was spent on huts, roads, drainage etc. on The Grove, Willow Grange and Thorntonhall properties that was charged to the Government "ARP" account over a three year spread. The furniture purchased, costing £26,092, was charged to an LMS Capital Account. The three properties together cost £115,269 and were owned by Lineside Estates who rented them to the LMS, charging £50,000 p.a. for The Grove, £20,000 for Thorntonhall and £800 for Willow Grange.

The Board meeting (Minute 4847), held on 26th October 1944 reduced these rents to £3,500, £1,100 and £475 respectively representing 4% of the capital outlay, plus rates. The LMS charged Lineside Estates for the services provided by the Estates Department at The Grove, typical amounts being £1000 for 1941 and £650 for 1942.

Chapter 6 – City of London properties.

11. City of Westminster Properties including Fielden House.

On the 1923 amalgamation, the LMS initially owned two properties in Westminster, one originally owned by the Midland Railway and the other by the LNWR. The Midland address was 16 George Street that was bought for £24,600 and partially occupied by Messrs Beale & Co., the ex Midland Railway Solicitors and LMS solicitors until 1st January 1924 together with others. When Messrs Beale and Co had their LMS contract terminated, part of the agreement was that they could retain their tenancy for twenty-one years from 1st January 1924. An offer to purchase the property was made by the Municipal Insurance Co., the asking price being £60,000 that they were not prepared to pay. It seems the holders of the lease were the Ecclesiastical Commissioners who required a payment of £20,000 if any rebuilding took place. The building was eventually sold in July 1935 for £48,000 to Dr J. F. Crowley and is now demolished.

The LNWR property was 34-36 Parliament Street that the LMS offered for sale at £150,000 in 1928. At that time it was partially used by the Aerated Bread Company who were offered £3000 to terminate their lease. Part of the building was used as an LMS parcels receiving and ticket office and it was reported that their presence was making a sale difficult. With no sale it was decided at the Land & Works Committee meeting on 29th January 1930 to retain the property as they were unlikely to get £150,000. The Traffic Department now wished to stay there due to increased business, the Staff Conferences and Railway Companies Association meetings should remain in Whitehall and that there was a prestige value in the site from both a public and Company viewpoint, although not all of the premises were occupied.

In 1930 Samuels the Jewellers wished to rent certain floors for a term of 42 years with an option to terminate by either party after 25 years. The LMS considered this to be too long a time and approached Lloyds Bank who were not interested. Samuels agreed to reduce the lease term and required an immediate decision, which was not forthcoming and so withdrew their offer as reported on 23rd July 1930.

Various other Companies already rented part of the building including Baker & Co., tobacconists, a Mr C. L. Fay and the National Labour Party rented the third floor for a year in 1931. Municipal Mutual Insurance expressed an interest in purchasing, and, at the meeting of the Land & Works Committee on 17th December 1930 tentative plans were presented to demolish and build a new modern building and referred the matter to the Board. Things did not move too rapidly as it was reported in March 1932 that the lift was very slow and to be replaced for £1,014 and the exterior of the building was to be steam cleaned for £430. Finally it was reported at the Board meeting on 27th October 1936 that Minerva Investments had paid a deposit to complete the sale on 31st December 1937 at a purchase price of £110,000.

Neither of the above transactions was with Lineside Estates although the cash raised built "Fielden House" below, which was their property.

The lease of 13 Great College Street was purchased for £5,000 and the demolition of 10 Great College Street cost £7,091 with the erection of a replacement four-storey office block being £48,961 as reported to the Board (minute 5183) on 22nd February 1939. The building was ready for occupation in September 1937 and named "Fielden House" after John Fielden who was born at Todmorden on 17th January 1784 who with his father and brothers ran the firm of Fielden Brothers, one of the largest cotton- manufacturing concerns in the UK. He was elected MP for Oldham in 1833 and was a strong supporter of the "Ten Hours Bill" to reduce the working man's day to ten hours. The Bill was eventually passed on 10th February 1841 having been defeated earlier on 29th April 1846. Initially.

The building was initially occupied by The Railway Companies Association, The Railway Staff Conference and the Railway Press Bureau that were transferred from their now sold 35 Parliament Street Offices. "Fielden House" did not remain in railway use for long as it was requisitioned from Lineside Estates by the Ministry of Works and Buildings on 3rd April 1941 at a

rent of £2,400 pa payable to The LMS £757/18/0d, the Railway Companies Association £1,136/17/0d and the GWR £505/5/0d that was presumably increased from time to time to enable them to rent else-where.

The building was occupied by the Scottish office until 1955 when it reverted back to railway use as in the "Railway Year Book" for 1959 it was stated to be occupied as offices of – Machinery of Negotiation for Railway Staff, The Railways Staff Conference and Railway Staff National Council. By 1966 the above organisations were housed in the British Railways Board Offices 222 Marylebone Road, London and the property sold to the Church Commissioners.

As with "The Grove Estate", Fielden House was transferred to the ownership of the Railways Board authorized by the document signed on 15th October 1964.

In January 2002 the property was bought by the Government on a 999 year lease for £7.7m to eventually accommodate 63 Members of the House of Lords, with eight Members of staff and had three meeting rooms and about 13,000 sq. ft. of floor space. The Lords were intending to change the name to Abingdon House and Hansard recounts that on 19th January 2005 Lord Elder wanted to know what factors lay behind the decision to change the name. It was stated the name Abingdon House was politically neutral but Lord Shutt of Greetland considered that someone who introduced the Ten Hour Bill was worthy of attention and the name Fielden House should remain. On the wall of the reception office a GWR poster is still in place as a reminder of its railway background. The refurbished building was stated to be ready for occupation on 10th January 2005.



Plate 16. "Fielden House", 13 Little College Street, Westminster, built by the LMS for £48,961 in 1937.

L. G. Warburton.

Plate 17. The main entrance to “Fielden House”, now in the ownership of Her Majesties Government for use by members of the House of Lords. 3rd April 2007.

L. G. Warburton.

Summary

Clearly the Prestatyn and Portrush Golf Club transactions were to do with the development of “railway Interests or the development of traffic”, as indeed would the purchase of Windermere Lake had it gone ahead. The Glasgow and Watford properties were to evacuate LMS staff from offices vulnerable to air attack in World War II. The disposal of the land purchased at Radlett is not recorded but it is not unreasonable to assume it would be akin to the “Metroland” developments by the Metropolitan Railway.

Finale.

The LMS Board meeting on 28th June 1945 (minute 4950) decided that whilst it was not desirable to wind up Lineside Estates there would be no extension of its activities. The properties owned by Lineside estates were reported as Fielden House, Westminster; The Grove Estate, Willow Grange and two houses at Watford, Grange Mill House and The Grey House, Alexandra Road, and Thorntonhall Estate, Glasgow. It was recommended, that with the exception of Fielden house, the properties be sold when the purpose for which they were acquired ceased. The post-war use of The Grove, Thorntonhall and Fielden House has already been stated although Thorntonhall Mansion has since been demolished.

From the foregoing it can be reasonably be assumed that “Lineside Estates” ceased to exist c. December 1964.



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THE LMS SOCIETY



This Monograph belongs to a series produced by members of the LMS Society to provide a background to the activities and achievements of the LMS Railway during its existence from 1st January 1923 to 31st December 1947

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